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PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION BRIEF

SEARCH FOR UNDERGROUND ENTRANCES LAUNCH AREA OF LAUNCH COMPLEX A TYURA TAM MISSILE TEST CENTER, USSR



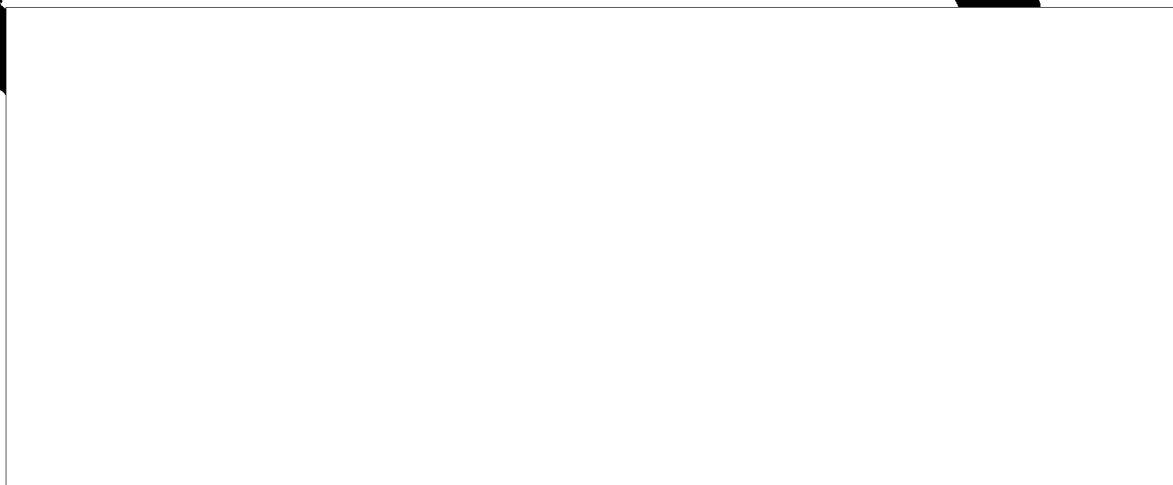
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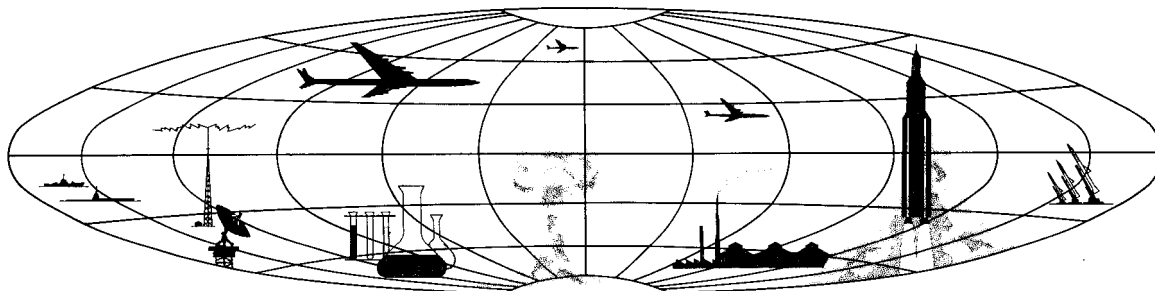


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NATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION CENTER



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SEARCH FOR UNDERGROUND ENTRANCES
LAUNCH AREA OF LAUNCH COMPLEX A
TYURA TAM MISSILE TEST CENTER, USSR

This brief presents the results of a search, on the 1957 and 1959 photography, for underground entrances in the southern part of the Launch Area at Launch Complex A, Tyura Tam Missile Test Center, USSR.

The area on the south side of the road-rail embankment was examined for personnel or vehicular entry points into the embankment. The presence of entrances could be neither confirmed nor denied from either photographic coverage. In addition, all the structures in this area, both inside and outside the two fences, were studied and have been reported on as to size, configuration, and possible function (Figure 1).

In 1957, extensive cross-country vehicular scars between the Launch Area and the Personnel and Storage Area indicate that during the construction phase traffic entered the Launch Area from the south side. The tonal quality of the 1959 photography prohibits an accurate appraisal of scarring, but what can be seen does not indicate a great increase in vehicular activity.

Examination of the area inside the inner fence on the south side of the embankment indicates that this area may be associated with handling, storage, or drainage of liquids or may provide general on-site storage space. The apparent absence of vehicular scarring on both the 1957 and 1959 photography indicates that vehicles do not frequent the area. No change from 1957 in the five items in the area has been noted on the 1959 coverage. There is evidence, specifically a roadway or path, that an entrance exists in the side of the embankment at a point where it intersects the south service road. It is impossible to identify a door, opening, or covering at this point on the 1957 coverage. This point was in shadow on the 1959 photography, but an irregularity in the curve, not present in

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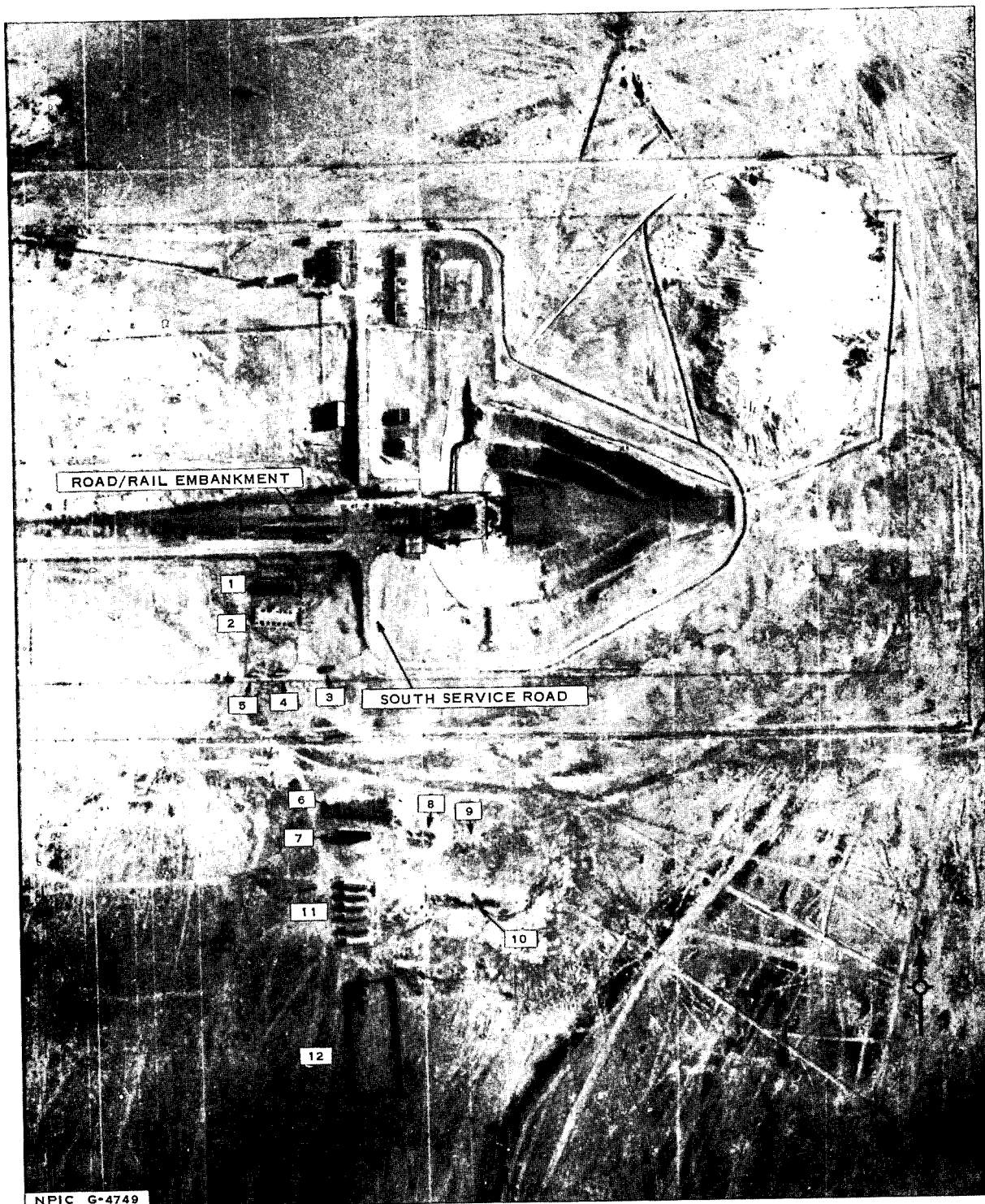
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FIGURE 1. LAUNCH AREA AT LAUNCH COMPLEX A (July 1959). Items 8, 9, and 10 were removed between 1957 and 1959.

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1957, indicates a change or the presence of an object in the embankment. However, it is considered illogical that an entry port would have been constructed in the period between overflights, since the embankment was complete in 1957 and there is no evidence of later construction.

Two other points of interest are located, 110 feet apart, along the straightaway of the embankment. These are quite similar and appear to be either exits for pipes buried beneath the main service road on the embankment or a facing for a vertical wall. A dark ground scar, probably from a path or pipe, extends from each of these points, flanks two buildings (items 1 and 2), and terminates at two small narrow structures (items 4 and 5), located along the inner fence. Between these two points the slope of the embankment is steeper than elsewhere, indicating that some additional preparation has been made. If the ground scars are from pipes, the pipes could be used to transfer liquids from rail tank cars to the structures near the fence line. If the scars are paths, the vertical wall face could be an entrance or the visible portion of a flight of steps.

Physical descriptions of the five items in this general area follow.

Item 1. One-story gable-roofed building, [REDACTED] This structure appears to be of light construction and possibly is tar-paper-roofed, with no vents or openings in the roof. It is possibly used for maintenance equipment storage or temporary personnel billets during launch operations.

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Item 2. One-story, shallow-gable-roofed building, [REDACTED] This structure has an unusual configuration but appears to be similar to those used for food or grain storage. It has five [REDACTED] extensions spaced 10 feet apart on each side.

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On the 1957 coverage, the ground around items 1 and 2 and up to the road-rail embankment was very dark and mottled. This shading is generally delineated by trackage and ditching. This shading was not apparent on the 1959 photography, indicating that it was temporary and possibly resulted either from the spillage or overflow of liquids or an attempt to control dust in the area with a treated material.

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Item 3. One-story flat-roofed building, 20 by 15 feet. This structure, a possible pumphouse, either straddles or lies alongside a pipe or path that branches at right angles from an existing line and appears to terminate at the bottom curve of the south service road. At its apparent terminal point, it appears to enter the roadbed above the general level of terrain, thus giving more weight to its being a pipe rather than a path.

Item 4. Structure or 2 horizontal tanks. This item, either one structure measuring [REDACTED] or two tanks measuring [REDACTED] is located at the terminus of one of the two probable pipes or paths which extend southward from the road-rail embankment.

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Item 5. Structure or 2 horizontal tanks. This item, either one structure measuring [REDACTED] or two tanks measuring [REDACTED] is located at the terminus of the other pipe or path which extends southward from the road-rail embankment. It is nearly identical with item 4 except for a slight variance in measurements, and this variance may be due to halation. These two items (4 and 5) are about 35 feet apart and there appears to be no connection between them. Since no positive identification can be made of either item, no function can be determined.

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In 1957, the area outside the fence was probably used as a personnel check point, vehicle assembly point, and minor equipment and material storage point during the construction of the launch area. It consisted of two large buildings, one small building, a semiburied storage structure, and a covered bunker with sloping approaches.

Of the items outside the fence in 1957, only the two large structures remained in 1959. However, six tents and a large fenced area were added. Since the area changed and was expanded, it is probable that its function also changed to one of off-site support. It is highly unlikely that missiles ever enter this general area.

The following is a description of the seven items.

Item 6. One-story gable-roofed building, 135 by 35 feet. This structure, present on both coverages, may possibly be a vehicle shed or storage building. A 40- by 20-foot extension, possibly a low flat-roofed structure,

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TOP SECRET [REDACTED]

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is positioned at right angles to the long axis of the building at the east end.

Item 7. One-story gable-roofed building, [REDACTED] This structure was present on both coverages. In 1957 there were at least five vehicles and some unidentified objects located on the south side; in 1959 these were not there. A mast or tower is also located along the south side of the structure.

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Item 8. Semiburied storage structure, 55 by 30 feet. This structure was removed between overflights.

Item 9. One-story gable-roofed building, 45 by 20 feet. This structure was removed between overflights. In 1957, at least 20 unidentified but insignificant objects were scattered just east of this building. On the 1959 coverage there was no evidence of these objects.

Item 10. Covered bunker, possibly a personnel or vehicle shelter. This structure was removed between overflights.

Item 11. Six ribbed tents, [REDACTED] These tents were added to the area after the 1957 overflight. They are in a staggered line, indicating that they are not permanent items and are possibly used as temporary shelters.

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Item 12. Solid-fenced area, 325 by 130 feet. This item was added after the 1957 overflight. Several dark objects are located in the northwest corner. No purpose can be ascribed to the area, but the solid fence indicates permanence and high security.

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REFERENCES

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DOCUMENTS

- CIA. HTA/JR-4/58, Missile Launching Complex and Test Range, Tyura Tam, USSR, Sep 58 (TSC)
- CIA. PIC/JR-2/60, Missile Launching Complex, Tyura Tam, USSR, Feb 60 (TSC)

COORDINATES

45-55N 63-30E

REQUIREMENT

CIA. OSI/R-46/61 (TSC)

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